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C'est Vrai.

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C'est Vrai.

AN IDYLL OF THE EAST.

by

*The Author of "England and Australia,"
"The Lost Child," "English
Country Sabbath,"
&c., &c.*



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PREFACE.

THE subject of these few stanzas caused a considerable stir in the neighbourhood of its occurrence, and a correspondence appeared from the several parties in a daily paper. The young lady was not given up until an appeal was threatened to the Law Courts.

The Author, in submitting the lines to the public, begs to say that they were written in two and a half days, without occupying the whole of the day, and were not intended to compete with works of time, deep thought, and study.

C'est Vrai.

AN IDYLL OF THE EAST.

I saw on a spring morning break
A little cloud of golden ray,
It struggled with the clouds that make
The early spring's morn often gray.

It kept its own until the sun
Rose o'er the earth in majesty
And clouds dispers'd, the beam had won,
And the blue sky was fair and free

From morning clouds or duller haze,
And day beamed in its usual splendour,
And evening closed in one bright blaze,
Till loving rays became more tender.

So rises oft upon the earth,
Sometimes where you might not expect it,
A human beam from gentle birth—
So fair, so bright, all would select it

To glad them in its sunny zone,
To catch a ray of purer light
Than oft illumines up a throne
Where guests are noble, hues are bright.

So on a summer's morn drew near
Four visitors in dashing tandem ;
And all were gentle, two were fair,
One a bright star shot forth at random :

A morning star, whose living beam
Spoke a bright sun of future days,
Whose flashing eyes could either teem
With melting love or anger's blaze.

As called forth from a loving heart,
Excited by an evil spirit,
When either of these two impart
Contagion that they both inherit.

She held not beauty in a form
Of perfect features, seldom found
Rich in an animated charm
That captivates who'er surround,

But with a dignity that spoke
A mind whose high and earnest view
Excited, either could invoke
A saint, or seal a martyr too.

Fit subject to be worked upon
By those with sinister design,
As will be in the sequel shown,
Of purpose earthly or divine.

Her hair was a dark chesnut-brown,
Which in its braids more sunny grew,
Her features softly chisell'd down,
Her eyes of darkest hazel hue ;

Complexion delicate to pale,
Not speaking wholly of this earth,
But which spake freshness to inhale
Its breezes, and a gentle birth.

I'm thus particular, because
I draw a living portrait, seen
On two occasions only, flaws
May arise from years between.

Her eyes might have been gray or blue,
They were expressive, full, and fine ;
I am not certain of their hue,
But certain that they were divine.

Her form was graceful, rather tall
For her then age, not wholly grown ;
A delicacy thrown o'er all
Would make you wish she were your own

Niece or daughter, that you might often
Meet with a little worldly treasure,
Destin'd the ills of life to soften
And charm the passing hours of leisure.

You meet a few times in your life—
A few times only—with a being
Enjoyment would be ever rife
In worshipping the idol seen.

The very first look would impress
So strong an image on the mind,
Not of a common loveliness,
But of a nature undefined ;

That look and look, but 't is a whole
And not a feature that attracts,
A blending of the mind and soul,
Aerial frame which neither lacks.

Approaching nearer such a being
You'd feel a quiet gentle awe,
And one that on the first time seeing
Would place you neither close nor far :

One that would chill you to respect,
Yet warm you with an inward glow
That would surmount a first effect
And leave a sunbeam on its snow :

One that were you daily with her,
Had won you to a love so deep,
The mind, the heart, the soul would stir
In waking intercourse or sleep.

Her parents, both of gentle birth,
Were Protestants, her aunt the same ;
They were unfortunate, a dearth
Quite common, with the times to blame,

Preyed upon one unused to bear
The wants and troubles therewith sent ;
Soon will the frame and spirit wear
And all life's impulse cease its bent,

That life consuming disease come,
That with a mournful sure decay
Calls the sweet spirit to its home,
And bears it from this Earth away.

So was her mother too soon taken :
Her father left to try anew,
Widow'd, perhaps of hope forsaken,
In brightest worldly prospects too,

Left her, by business called away,
Under protection of an aunt :
I scarcely now know what to say
On theme unpleasant to descant.

'Tis curious ! the Romish priesthood
Are very choice in their selection
Of inmates for the sisterhood,
Nor dislike Protestant connection.

Their own sect may be better vers'd
In the deep myst'ries of seclusion,
And in the many that are hearsed,*
To volunteer in a profusion ;

So in this instance, this young maiden
Coax'd to be mistress of a school,
And no doubt by th' attentions paid on
Clerical visits, priestly rule,

* A young girl was stated to be then dying of consumption in the convent to which this young Protestant was sent.

Was to a convent soon transferr'd,
Where the then head of the church
Bent upon measures now averr'd
Left her protectress in the lurch.

What was this young girl wanted for?
May be fair question to suggest :
For holy purposes, which jar
Howe'er with reason, are a pest.

A Protestant, and under age,
Slyly inveigl'd in absence
Of only parent, to engage
To teach a school as a pretence

Of Roman Catholics, could tend
Of course, to nothing but perversion
From her own creed, and, in the end,
By base advantage cause desertion.

Rome's priesthood over all the world
Are found the same, a hateful set
In instances, and I have hurled
This critic upon that once met.

Can man, by nature born impure,
Be trusted in a case like this ?
How conscientiously immune
A girl by nature form'd for bliss ?

Can one who thus breaks human ties
Be trusted in a higher sphere ?
Can he where moral duty dies
Before a human creature fair

Be trusted with the inmost thought
And outward custody of one
Whose very letters* told her heart
Had by his artifice been won ?

* Published in a daily paper with her signature.

Rome, Rome ! go take to thee a wife,
 Leave off seduction under guise
Of fair religion, leave her rife
 In earthly virtues all can prize :

Avoid temptation, tell mankind
 What converts are, and be content.
Choose from your creed whom you can find,
 Know human passions must have vent :

Know that sin cannot absolve sin,
 Nor hinder any impure thought
Unless God's spirit be within,
 Direct and guide a godless heart :

Know that a priest is but a man
 With human passions, scarce less prone
To evil, when the truth we scan,
 Than fellow mortals of his own.

'Twas fortunate that in this case
Her parent return'd just in time
To defeat this, and put disgrace
On him that planned it, and I chime

In with him, and all thus beguiled
By subtle proselyting tact :
Who parent separates from child
Commits a cruel, sinful act.

All nature even cries out shame,
All creatures will protect their young ;
No animal that you can name
But is with grief or madness stung

When robbed by subtlety or force
Of offspring : hark ! now in the wild
A bellow often loud and hoarse,
And now a plaintive low and mild,

As either rage or grief prevail :

Now a huge tear is in the eye,
And now a lashing of the tail,
But she has bid her calf good-bye.

For days she roams the bush around,
Her cries more plaintive to the end,
And would it with her offspring found
Immur'd, d'ye think the case amend ?

The songstress perch'd upon her spray,
Utters but one sad plaintive note,
When erst she warbl'd sweet away
And rattled from her little throat.

Her nest by some rude thoughtless boy
Is robbed, and of her young bereft
Her song has ceased its note of joy,
And tender sadness has been left.

You deem this cruel :—is it less
To rob man of a darling child
Who happy in a fond caress
Suspected not that one had wiled

Her love away, to give strange birth
To other feelings, passions, trials,
Estranged from dearest ties of earth,
For new religious self-denials ?

Think you th' Almighty sanctions this ?
What is His fifth Commandment for ?
Let those permitted seek the bliss,
If it be such, it does not jar

With the Commandment ; but let those
Who readily break it fear the worst :
'T will not be impious to suppose
They and their priest will both be curs'd.

To use Religion as a cloak
For evil, when is seen the need,
And saddle her with this foul yoke,
Belongs but to one Christian creed :

And though Religion thus be used
It may not—cannot last for ever :
God and His Truth though thus abused
Are still but One, which none can sever.

And where is the portrait of this theme ?
I know not, but sincerely hope
Not wrapt in an unhallow'd dream
Of heavenly kaleidoscope.

O ! pray young women bear in mind
What you were made for, let not man
By specious pleading all design'd
In his own purposes and plan

Deceive you ; still less lead astray
By strain of the imagination
“ The even tenor of your way,”
First fit you for your simple station ;

We'll e'en suppose your priest can bridle
Human passions, nor more intends
Than make a young girl a fond idol,
And fit her for religious ends.

Is not this sinful ? ask your heart
What is its feeling towards him,
And it will tell you to depart,
T' avoid a new and sudden whim.

Stay in the beaten track, nor trust
Your footsteps in a path unknown,
Where but *Man* beckons, fear the worst—
Once, once regretted, joy has flown.

When youth is past, and those charms gone
That first attracted, and you meet
With coldness, and you find among
The younger inmates charms more sweet ;

Find them caress'd and prais'd and flatter'd,
As you were in the days gone by,
Your hopes and aspirations scatter'd
As light clouds of a summer sky,

Believe me that your sun has set
Of worldly happiness, the star
You looked for in your eve has met
A cloud that will its brightness mar.

Believe me sin can't be walled out
With brick and mortar, or so guarded
By nuns, superiors about,
But it shall enter though thus warded.

Nor put too great faith in a priest,
He may be agent of the devil,
A parent will be free, at least,
From leading you to any evil :

And do not evil for good's sake,
If so supposed, for that is wrong ;
The Scripture tells you so, and make
It to your rule of life belong :

Take only Scripture for your guide
And you are safe, it cannot err.
Seek God and in His Truth abide,
He will be found, I will aver,

As surely in your own fond home
As in all convents ever built ;
And suffer not your minds to roam
On popes or priesthood, who have spilt

The blood of mankind long enough,
And be contented to embrace
The truths of Scripture, without stuff
Of man's invention ; his disgrace.

And as the skylark springs from earth,
Then in successive boundings rises,
In its fond praises pours forth |
The song that ev'ry bosom prizes,

And then to earth again descends
To gather food and tend the nest,
And God has heard it and He lends
His help that none should it molest.

So lends He help to those who call ;
His human creatures who delight
To do His will ; and one and all
Shall in His mercies see the Light,

And dwell where truth shall yet be found
To triumph over human error,
And show where falsehood did abound
To keep His earth in blood and terror.

And where the faggot and the stake
Shall rise in judgment upon those
Who introduced such but to make
Idolaters of those who chose

To take the Scripture for their guide,
And own one only Mediator
Between God and man, to provide
Sole sacrifice to his Creator.

And He alone shall in that day
Be worshipp'd, and the pride of man
Be then laid low, add to my lay
The pride of priesthood He shall scan.





